



MONTEREY NEWS

MARCH 1998
VOLUME XXVIII · Number 3



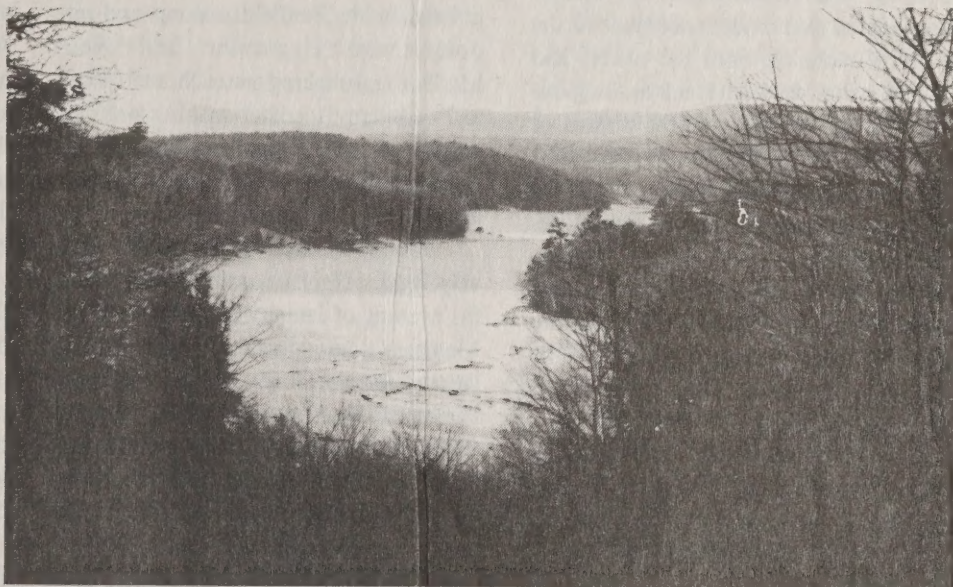
THE TOWN

Who Cruises on Monterey Lakes. There was a standing-room only crowd the evening of February 2 at the Town Hall when the Select Board held a public hearing about two possible bylaws prohibiting jet skis on Lake Garfield and the Monterey section of Lake Buel. It was clear that it is not only the manufacturers of these small water craft who oppose such a ban.

Residents opposing the ban agreed that the irresponsible use of jet skis can be dangerous when riders use excessive speed, and disregard their proximity to shore lines. Lake Garfield resident Peter Chaite said that tickets should be given to those who do not observe 45 m.p.h. speed limits and the 150 foot clearance from shorelines. He, nor anyone else present, seemed clear about precisely what the speed limit on jet skis is. His children, he said, have been educated on boating safety and enjoy the sport responsibly. Where these irresponsible boaters come from he doesn't know. There were questions regarding who would be available to enforce boating laws that went unanswered. Mr. Chaite's main point, echoed by Chris Cobb, was what next will be banned by government? Susan Bachelder, also a jet skier, said the noise and danger is generated by outsiders who use Lake Buel. Chris Wagner suggested closing the lake to non-residents. But, again, there was the question of how this would be enforced.

Those opposing jet skis on the lakes were in the majority at the hearing. Harbor Master Dean Amidon, who has a summer cottage on Lake Garfield, said that over the years, he has seen increased use of jet skis and has observed their breaking water safety laws. He suggested that much of the care-

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Frozen here, Lake Garfield was the subject of heated debate at the Special Town Meeting where voters approved a ban on jet skis for both Lake Garfield and Lake Buel.

lessness and bad manners exhibited by the jet skiers are perhaps associated with drinking while boating. He hopes the ban will pass before an accident "just waiting to happen" occurs. Amidon was seconded by Richard Nault, who complained of the noise and wakes created, and also by Fred Vorck who spoke of skiers spending the entire day going back and forth on Lake Buel creating perpetual noise. Jim Thomas also spoke of the noise and bad manners exhibited by skiers in front of his mother's place on Lake Buel where they once enjoyed tranquility. David Logan said that he had no problem with residents' skiing. "It's the outsiders who are untenable."

Likewise, a public hearing on cellular telecommunication towers or bylaw article IV was held on February 6. A small group of citizens were on hand to hear about the article that would enable and regulate the siting, construction, maintenance and monitoring of cellular towers. Tony Blair of the Great Barrington Planning Board, which has already dealt with this question, was on

hand to explain the bylaw. Blair was instrumental in helping the Monterey Planning Board write a comprehensive bylaw.

An area within a one-quarter-mile radius of the summit of Mount Wilcox (located in Beartown State Forest) has been designated for Monterey's Wireless Telecommunications Overlay District.

The proposed bylaws came to a vote at a Special Town Meeting on February 27.

Special Town Meeting. There was a large crowd on hand at the Special Town Meeting to hear the same arguments both for and against jet skis on Lakes Garfield and Buel. Those opposed to the ban regard it as an invasion of individual rights. Those in favor of the ban cite their persistence as a noise pollutant and safety hazard. There was discussion about policing the lakes for adherence to boating laws, which many deemed impractical and expensive. Prohibition of jet skis was passed with 36 in favor of the bylaw and 23 voting against the ban. Due to Lake Buel's status as a great pond, the bylaw must first be submitted to the

Department of Fisheries and Wildlife for review, and then onto the Attorney General for approval.

After a brief introduction by Planning Board Chair Wayne Burkhardt, Tony Blair explained the Wireless Telecommunication Tower bylaw to the audience. Blair described the chosen location of Mount Wilcox for the siting of the towers, and answered questions regarding methods of reducing their visual impact via camouflage. He also addressed concerns about the effect of radiation from the towers and explained that, due to the remote siting this bylaw proposes, there would be minimal or no adverse effects. Blair also explained the procedure for dismantling the towers if the telecommunication company should decide to discontinue their service. Cynthia Weber pointed out that the Town of Lee had had to accept a proposed 190-foot communications tower because the town had no bylaw to regulate the siting of the tower. The bylaw passed with a voice vote.

Guess Who's Back! The one man/one vote issue for the Southern Berkshire Regional School Committee is back in the news. Judge Michael Ponsor of Springfield has ordered that until a final judgment is made by trial, the five Southern Berkshire Regional School District towns will have to have school committee vacancies and positions filled by select board appointment. He

set March 27 as the deadline for all pretrial arguments to be completed, but also indicated that his court will be tied up for several months with another case. Judge Ponsor has stated that district-wide voting with residency requirements, the plan favored by Alford, Egremont, and many residents of the other towns, is a reasonable solution. Sheffield has recently submitted a compromise plan of having five positions elected district wide and five positions appointed, with Sheffield making two appointments, Egremont and New Marlborough making one each, and Alford and Monterey together making one appointment. Judge Ponsor was quoted in the *Berkshire Eagle* as characterizing that plan as "exotic."

Transportation Needs for the Elderly. Pauline Nault was at the Town Hall on the evening of January 26 to look out for Monterey's transportation needs for the elderly. Dianne Smith, administrator for Berkshire Regional Transit Authority (BRTA), addressed the meeting with a plan to service our community. Pauline said that Monterey is well satisfied with its present use of Southern Berkshire Elderly Transportation (SBET) and suggested that perhaps the BRTA and SBET might combine or coordinate their service. The Select Board agreed.

Renovation Plans Underway. On February 10 a quarterly meeting of town boards was held. The item of discussion was renovations to the Town Hall. Peter Brown, Select Board Chair, said that for a long time the town has been trying to make improvements, but much still is left to be done. Monterey continues to need a handicapped access ramp, basement space, space for the safe storage of documents, and more space for groups to meet without being on top of one another. Brown estimates that adequate additional space would be almost equal to the existing area of the Town Hall. Monterey failed to get the Small Cities grant, which would have taken care of a lot of the financial needs, but Brown expressed hope that perhaps Monterey would qualify for some other loans. When asked about cost, Brown said a rough estimate would be between \$175,000 and \$275,000. He also spoke of Monterey's fiscally conservative past and its ability to keep up with the needs of its citizens.

Apparently, repairs to the Wilson/McLaughlin House would still not fulfill the Town Hall needs. Again there was discussion of its great value to the town and its potential as a community center. Brown said that the Wilson/McLaughlin House committee and Taconic Foundation must come up with a solution soon.

During the February 23 morning meeting of the Board of Health the Select Board met with several designers/architects to discuss innovations and compliance with Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements. These firms responded to advertised ads in the *Berkshire Eagle* and the *Central Register*. The application deadline for Town Hall renovation is March 2. This item will not be on the warrant for the May Annual Town Meeting.

Police Chief Reports. Chief Gareth Backhaus reported February 23 that there have been some problems regarding use of police to direct traffic when trees have been taken down on Routes 23 and 57. Backhaus says his service has always been available and public utilities are aware of policies regarding this service.

He also spoke of two recent possible break-ins in Monterey. Issues regarding them are still cloudy.

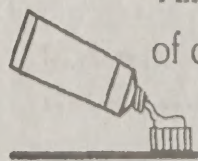
As an interesting aside, he reported that as part of his training in recognizing and arresting drunk drivers, the Academy paid some college students to get drunk so that officers could practice handling drunk drivers. Each person, Backhaus said, reacts differently. Currently, eye tests are being used to determine the number of blinks the alleged drinkers exhibit when their eyes follow the motions of a pen. Marijuana users respond in the same fashion to this test. Pocket breathalizers used to determine if a person should be arrested for drunk driving are still being field tested.

Another Interesting Aside. Gige O'Connell, Board of Health Clerk, recently received notice from the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection that out of \$1.37 million in grants this year, Monterey will be rewarded a total of \$29. The one page notice arrived in a brown envelope with \$1.01 postage. That's conservation!

Miscellany. Jack Ryder has been appointed to fill the vacant post left by Andrea Dunlop on the Finance Committee. Ryder

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is eminently qualified by his past experience on the Finance Board.

The Select Board unanimously voted to adopt a resolution urging full funding in the Fiscal Year 1999 budget for one hundred percent of the costs of school transportation and individual education-plan services. In the Southern Berkshire Regional School District, these items exceed by more than twenty-five percent the state average per-pupil cost. This resolution will be forwarded to the Town's state representative, Chris Hodgkins, and to the Governor.

Moved by Muriel Lazzarini and unanimously voted by the Board, Martin Clark of Great Barrington was elected to the office of Inspector of Animals for a term expiring on June 30, 1998; the appointment fills the vacancy created by the resignation of Richard Tryon.

Media Advisory to Monterey Board of Health. Rabies is still a problem in Berkshire County. You can prevent rabies by vaccinating pets and livestock, and by avoiding wild animals. Many pet owners neglect to vaccinate their dogs, cats, or ferrets, but this is an important step and required by law. Dogs must be licensed and be currently vaccinated against rabies by April 30. Don't forget your cats. There have been over sixty rabid cats in Massachusetts since the epidemic began in 1992.

Applications for the 1998 McLaughlin-Wilson Scholarship are now available at the Town Office. Preference is given to students as they are entering their first year of higher education after high school. However, applications are welcomed from any Monterey resident pursuing higher education. This may include vocational school, trade school, apprenticeship, college or graduate school.

The following requirements apply: a) residency in the Town of Monterey: in general, the student must have physically lived within Monterey during most of the last two years of high school. An exception would be made for boarding school students; and b) merit is to be the primary criterion of any scholarship award, but need and other factors will be considered.

Completed forms are to be submitted to the Berkshire Taconic Community Foundation by April 30, 1998.

— Jane Black

REPUBLICAN CAUCUS

The Town Republican Committee met at Dean and Fran Amidon's home on February 14. George Emmons was welcomed as a new committee member and accepted the job of committee treasurer, a position that was formerly held by the late Hans Kessler.

Emmons was also unanimously voted as the Republican nominee for candidate for Town Finance Committee member, to be voted on at the Monterey Town Meeting on May 2.

Officers for the Town Republican Committee are Mark Makuc, chairman, Dean Amidon, vice chairman, Linda Thorpe, recording secretary, and Fran Amidon, corresponding secretary.

The Committee will meet at the Firehouse on March 7 at 1:00 p.m. followed by the Town Republican Caucus at 1:30 p.m. At this time a delegate will be chosen to attend the State Republican Convention and nominations for candidates to fill local offices will be accepted and voted upon.

There is space for one more member of the Town Republican Committee. We are looking for interested candidates.

The Republican Party in Monterey is very small - therefore we invite and strongly urge any Republicans in Monterey to join us and contribute to the working of our town government. We need your help.

— Fran Amidon


COMMUNITY DINNER

After a long pause, about forty people attended a community dinner on Thursday, February 12. Ed Pine had called an old Monterey custom to life again. Peter Murkett talked about the making of the sesquicentennial anniversary book, "Monterey, A Local History." The people present voted to continue with community dinners every six weeks.

The next community dinner is scheduled for Thursday, March 26, at 6:30 p.m., in the community room of the Monterey Meeting House (church). A program showing old Monterey video clips is planned. It's a pot luck dinner and everybody is invited.

— David Bach

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RABIES CLINIC

A Rabies Clinic will be held at the Monterey Fire House on Saturday, March 21, from 1-2:30 p.m. Marge Gulick from Bilmar Veterinary will be inoculating dogs and cats who are due for rabies shots between March 21 through June 21. The rabies shots are a real bargain at nine dollars each, and help protect both animals and people against rabies which have been a problem in southern Berkshire County.

— Barbara Swann

NEW MARLBOROUGH CENTRAL AND MONTEREY SCHOOL

A tradition at New Marlborough Central School (NMC) is the recognition of the one hundredth day of school. This milestone was celebrated this year by the creation of a one hundred-day quilt. This paper patchwork of numbered blocks was crafted by students and staff. The bright, colorful wall hanging is on display in the gym/assembly room at NMC.

NMC students are taking land preservation to a global level with an exciting project coordinated by Francine Groener. The school is participating in the Earth Foundation/Nature Conservancy Adopt an Acre and Rescue a Reef Campaign. According to the literature, the targeted areas of preservation are the Cerro San Gil forest and the Sierra de las Minas Biosphere reserve, both in Guatemala. The Rescue the Reef project benefits coral reefs in the Dominican Republic and the Islands of Palau. For every ten t-shirts or backpacks sold one acre of endangered rainforest or a square meter of coral reef will be adopted by the school. Remember in the Shared Discovery program these children studied the rainforests of South America so they know the consequences of losing even a small portion of this land. The t-shirts have bright, eye-catching logos, are only \$13.00 each and can be purchased through the school by calling 229-8867. This project has the added bonus of tangible proof that our students can make a positive impact on a world problem a continent away.

— Debbie Mielke

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FIREMAN'S BLOTTER

Winter Firefighter Training

The Monterey Fire Department has been conducting firefighter training during the fall and winter. This training has been conducted in two stages: 1. a house on the New Marlborough Road was burned by the Monterey Fire Department for training purposes; and 2. we have a Massachusetts Firefighting Academy instructor teaching firefighter training classes. Scheduling the training burn prior to the classroom instruction gave each firefighter live fire experience, and ensured that the classroom training would have greater impact.

The training fire that took place on the New Marlborough Road commenced at about 9 a.m. on November 29. We started by setting some small, very smoky fires and conducted low-to-no-visibility search and rescue drills in which each fire fighter entered the building at least twice. After the search and rescue drills, several larger, well ventilated fires were set on the first floor. Each entry team then entered the building and watched how the fire behaved as it grew. This exercise gave each team member a chance to study fire behavior under live conditions. The next series of fires were set in various rooms to allow the entry teams to practice fire suppression techniques under various conditions.

The classroom training sessions are being conducted by Joe Jervis, a Massachusetts Firefighting Academy instructor. He is covering all aspects of fire-ground operations including safety, communication, scene assessment and apparatus deployment, and fire suppression tactics and strategy. One firefighter is currently taking the Massachusetts Emergency Medical Technician course which requires 140 hours of classroom time, ten hours of emergency room observation and ten hours of ambulance observation.

A reminder to all you sportsmen and women, please exercise extreme caution when ice fishing and/or snowmobiling on our lakes. Please make sure that the ice is thick enough. While we are cold water rescue specialists, we would rather only have to practice these types of rescue operations. Have a safe and fun winter.

— Del Martin



During a training burn Monterey firefighters entered a house on New Marlborough Road under heavy smoke conditions to learn more about fire behavior.

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WHO WAS THIS JESUS?

James Carse, in his recent book "The Gospel of the Beloved Disciple," has created a "stunning new gospel - in the words of Jesus' beloved disciple, a [Samaritan] woman." This is not another novel about Jesus. Carse is reviving "an ancient tradition of writing gospels to communicate the contemporary meaning of Jesus' life and teaching."

James Carse writes that "the gospel is a literary form unique to Christianity. The first gospel to be composed is probably that attributed to Mark, written some thirty years after the death of Jesus. By the end of the second Christian century scores of gospels had been written. Each gospel was written to declare the truth of Jesus' life and teaching. However, because the evangelists relied partly on a collective memory and partly on their own imaginations, there are as many interpretations of the life of Jesus as there are gospels."

In 325 C.E., Constantine, emperor of Rome, called a conference in a small Anatolian city of Nicea (Turkey). The purpose was to settle disputes about teachings that were dividing the early Christian church. It

was at this conference that four gospels - Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John - were chosen to be officially authoritative. All other gospels, with the exceptions of the gospel of Thomas, were excluded.

Carse raises the question, "Are we warranted in resuming the early Christian practice of writing gospels as a way of presenting the mystery and the meaning of the life of Jesus?" He goes on to comment that "We must abandon the claim that we can reach back to the 'real' Jesus. That was never possible, even for the earliest evangelists. We must do as they did: let the unique and terrible experience of our own century reflect itself in our writing about another... Luke and John and Thomas cannot all be right, neither are they all wrong. Each wrote a gospel grounded in the time of Jesus and their own time. Why should we do less?"

Beginning Monday, March 16, from 7-8:30 p.m., a study group will meet to discuss this provocative book by James Carse. Everyone is welcome. If you are interested, please contact Keith Snow at 528-5850 to decide about ordering the book.

—Keith Snow, Pastor
Monterey United Church of Christ

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DAFFODIL PICK-UP MARCH 25

Here it is, your last chance for a sure-thing early spring. The Daffodil Days fund raiser for the American Cancer Society is in full swing this month. The daffodils are five dollars per bunch of ten flowers, and orders must be in by March 13. It is necessary to prepay with either cash or a check to the American Cancer Society. The flowers will be in on March 25 and can be picked up at the Monterey General Store.

There are many volunteers throughout the town working on this fund raiser. Cynthia Weber is handling flowers for the elderly and shut-in, and Maynard and Gayle Forbes are funding them. Pat Mielke is in charge of the financial aspects of the fund raiser. If you wish to order daffodils please contact one of the many volunteers: Leona Chamberlain 528-0148; Ruth Champigny 528-1248; Carol Edleman 528-0006; Stephanie Grotz 528-4519; Maureen Hough 528-0782; Jane Kessler 528-1023; Maggie Leonard 528-1170; Debbie Mielke 528-1871; Michèle Miller 528-3454; Nancy Rowley 528-6952; Anita Carroll-Weldon 528-6888.

Over the past year the American Cancer Society has helped many people in Western Massachusetts through Patient and Family Services. Here is a brief sample: 100 patients received over 1500 rides to treatment; 83 patients received nutritional supplements; 85 patients were approved for free wigs and turbans; 238 women received free mammograms from the mobile diagnostics van; 40 women have participated in our "Look Good, Feel Better" group programs; 150 people attended the "We Can" weekend. Your donation will help support these and other important programs.

— Fran Amidon

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We will have some tools available such as clippers, pruners, axes, chain saws, and rakes, but it will help if you bring your own. Make sure to wear long trousers, gloves, protective eye covering, and stout shoes.

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— Joyce Scheffey

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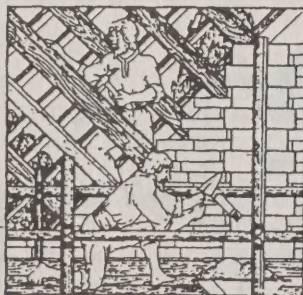
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THE FAMILY NETWORK/ CHILDREN'S HEALTH, INC.

The Family Center is located at 940 South Main Street, Great Barrington; call 528-0721 for more information. All activities are at the Family Center, unless otherwise noted.

Family Network Notes. We are happy to welcome Tony Blair as the new coordinator of the South Berkshire Task Force for Families and Children. This organization encourages collaboration between schools, agencies, and individuals and works to provide parent education and support services to the community.

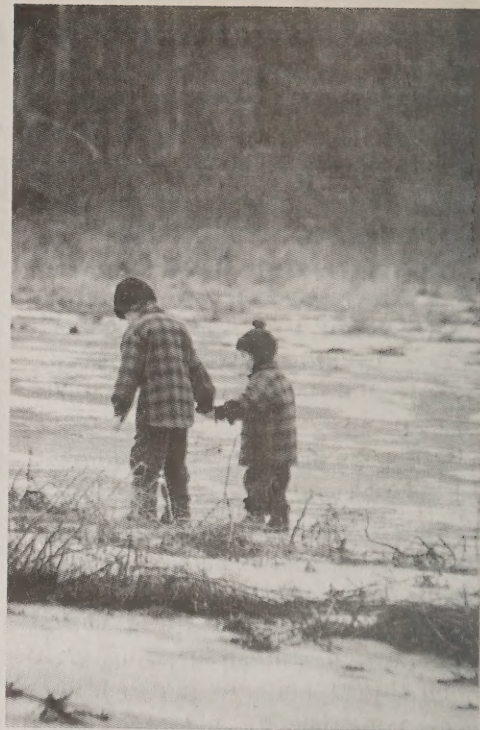
We are also fortunate to have the services of Gail Bobin, a legal advocate with the Elizabeth Freeman Center (formerly Women's Services). She will be at the South Berkshire District Court on Mondays and Thursdays, 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m., to advise persons needing access to the court system. Rounding out the wealth of services is Willeen Austin, a counselor, who will be available to women on Mondays at the Russell House, 54 Castle Street, Great Barrington.

The Family Center would like to thank Richard Vilane, tax consultant, who donated his services to advise the licensed daycare providers concerning tax matters.

The Family Center is in need of one or two good used bureaus for the Clothing Exchange area. Please call if you have one to donate. Also, anyone wishing to donate a crib is asked to contact Pregnancy Support Services, 528-9006. Cribs and bassinets are needed and will be distributed to families who need the items, however, the Family Center does not have storage room for cribs.

Parent to parent volunteers are needed in the following towns: Lee, Becket, Otis and Sandisfield. A training will be arranged in one of these towns if enough volunteers are willing to be trained. Parent to parent volunteers are matched with families in which there is a pregnancy or child under three years of age. Volunteers can help with transportation to important appointments, emotional support and information about child development and services that can assist families. Volunteers are asked to donate one to two hours a week for one year. Please call for more information.

Some parents have offered to serve on a fund-raising committee to help raise money that will go towards buying necessary items for the Family Centers. Please call if you would like to help.



GWYNNE DUNLOP

Jacob Markwood-Smith lent a steady hand to little brother Noah on a icy walk at Gould Farm.

We are seeking the names of families that need licensed daycare in the evenings and on the weekends. We are hoping to provide a center for child care during this time. Please call Vicki or Claudette if you have this need.

We are planning a Community Egg Hunt in April and will plan special activities for the Week of the Young Child in April. We welcome volunteers from the community to assist with these activities. Please call if you can help or if you have ideas of activities for young children.

Health Tip: During times of many colds and flu bugs, parents often are unsure of when to call their physician. A good rule of thumb is to call the doctor if the child has a fever.



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Weekends best — Leave message

Here is our calendar.

Family Center drop-in times:
Mondays noon-2 p.m.; Tuesdays and Fridays 3-5 p.m.; Wednesdays and Thursdays 10 a.m.-noon.

Every Monday and Friday. Play and Learn Group for three and four year olds, registration required 9 a.m.-noon.

Every Monday except March 30, Fathers Group 7 p.m.

Every Tuesday, Mother-Baby Exercise Class 8:30 a.m. Pre-registration required. Childcare available.

Every Tuesday, English As A Second Language Class 9:30 a.m. Pre-registration required. Childcare available.

Every Wednesday and Thursday, Parent-Child Playgroups 9:30 a.m.-11:30 a.m. Please call Center for playgroup information in other towns.

March 3, Licensed Day Care Providers Support Group 7 p.m.

March 4, Breast-feeding Support Group 9:30 a.m. Center For Pediatric And Adolescent Health Care, Fourth Floor, Fairview Hospital. For information, please call 413-528-8580.

March 4, Parents' Dinner Club, dinner provided by the Deli Restaurant, Great Barrington, short program "Adult Self-Care" led by Clare K. Stomper, PNP, CHN. Limited to 20 adults. Please call to register.

March 11 and 18, Step-Parenting Workshop led by Melinda Olds, MSW, 6:30 p.m. Childcare available. Please call to register. Co-sponsored by Family Network and South Berkshire Task Force for Families and Children.

March 14, Mom's Retreat at Kripalu. Activities and lunch included for \$22.50 per person for a group of ten. Call for information and to register.

March 14, Storytime, Sandisfield Library, led by Kathleen Bracken, 10 a.m. Co-sponsored by Family Network and Arts Council of Sandisfield.

March 20, First Day of Spring at Gould Farm. Visit the sap house, and learn how maple syrup is made. Enjoy some maple syrup, stories, and activities. Dress warmly. Meet at the McKee School 10 a.m.

March 25, Basket Making Class. Learn how to make a berry basket. Appropriate for an Easter basket. Led by basketmaker, Wendy Jensen 6:30 p.m. \$15 charge to cover materials. Scholarships available. Call to register.

March 26, A workshop on, Empowering Your Child Through Discipline, led by Bob Boylston, MSW, Second Floor Town Hall, Otis, 11:30 a.m. Childcare available. Please call Loren 258-0240 to register and arrange childcare.

March 27, Spring in Sandisfield, Parent-Child Playgroup 10:30 a.m., at the Community Center.

March 30, A workshop on The Right Question, led by Doris Orellano 5:30-8:30 p.m. Childcare available. All are invited to learn to develop and strengthen skills that better enable us to be a partner in our child's education. Co-sponsored by Family Network and North Berkshire Community Coalition. Please call to register and to arrange Childcare.



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An elated Steve Fennell of team Out Of Bounds hoists the Monterey Cup aloft after their victory over the Blue Hill Rangers. Players are, from left to right, Pat Fennell, Bill Fennell, Steve Fennell, Matt Cote, Kevin Foss, and Eric Furlong.

THE MONTEREY CUP

The ninth annual Monterey Cup was held on Saturday, February 14, at the ice rink in the pavilion behind the Monterey Firehouse. Team Out Of Bounds, which included Kevin Foss, Steve Fennell, Pat Fennell, Bill Fennell, Matt Cote, and Eric Furlong, prevailed to win the cherished Cup. The Blue Hill Rangers, last year's champions were ousted in the finals and Jim Thomas, Lincoln Lipsky, Bill Sadlowski, Roger Tyron, and Steve Butenski had to settle for the runner-up trophies.

MAGGIE LEONARD

There were five teams in the competition which began with a round-robin that rewarded the top two finishing teams with a one-point lead into the next game. Team Blades, with Jay Amidon, Pete Murkett, Rick Andrus, Wayne Dunlop, David Markwood-Smith, and Phil Newey, played hard but could not score the necessary goals to propel them into the finals. Team New Sheffborough, comprised of players from New Marlborough and Sheffield, and team Berkshire, with players from around the county, rounded out the roster of challengers.

Thanks to the Parks Commission, and Parks Commission member Jim Thomas, the Monterey Cup has become a cherished winter tradition. During a phone conversation Thomas said that next year will mark the tenth anniversary of the Monterey Cup and he mused that a special celebration would be in order. Thomas also hopes that local skaters are not too discouraged by the unreliable ice conditions and warmer temperatures generated by the El Niño weather pattern this year. "This not the end of skating in Monterey by any means," stated Thomas "We'll be back next year big time."

— Maggie Leonard



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PHOTO CONTEST UPDATE

Entries for the **Susan McAllester Memorial Photo Contest** are piling up in the office of the *Monterey News*. The response has been gratifying and we are looking forward to more photo submissions as the deadline of April 30 draws near.

The contest is designed to honor long-time Monterey photographer, the late Susan McAllester, as well as encourage local photographers in their craft. McAllester's artistry enhanced the pages of this newspaper for many years, and she freely shared her knowledge of photography with others.

It has been so exciting to see the work submitted to date. There is a lot of talent hidden in these hills and valleys, and it is great to see it showing up at the *News*. Don't be left out! Send in your photographs by April 30, 1998. Contact Maggie Leonard with any questions at 528-1170.

— Maggie Leonard

FREE HEALTH SCREENINGS

Free cholesterol and blood pressure screenings will be administered on Tuesday, March 17, and Tuesday, May 19, and every other month thereafter on the third Tuesday of the month. This free health screening, held in the basement of the Town Hall, is offered to all age groups. The program is conducted in conjunction with Fairview Hospital, the Berkshire Visiting Nurse Association and the Monterey Council on Aging.

— Pauline Nault



An abandoned hay rake formed a bold graphic against the fresh snow.

SUSAN MCALLESTER MEMORIAL PHOTO CONTEST

Sponsored by the *Monterey News* with a grant from the Monterey Cultural Council

First Prize \$50

Second Prize \$30

Third Prize \$20

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The contest is open to all amateur photographers. All photos must be taken in Monterey. Categories are: architecture, action, nature and portraits.

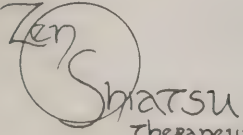
Photographs may be sent to P.O. Box 9, Monterey, Massachusetts, 01245
Deadline for submissions is April 30, 1998.

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CRESCENT MOON

*crescent moon in the western sky
you've just appeared, now you want to go
you tied my tongue, become my wine
while someone sang of Galileo
our poems fly in the wind, fall to the ground
our hearts cry skyward, weep to the sea
you smiled descending, while the sun rose
on a new poem on astronomy
on how the universe began
the meaning of planets and why we met
but why do you have to leave so soon
with so much gravity gripping yet?
like Saturn savoring my satellites
I'll make rings for beauty's sake alone
for you and your lovely lunar surface
for orbits sake don't leave me on my own
you sing a song of asteroids
of comets and of shooting stars
you sing of being free of suns
or Earths or Jupiters or Mars
you sing of cosmic exploration
I've heard that theory at least a bit
for I too sang of meteorites
and I too hurtled infinite
please stay awhile dear crescent moon
please linger in the western sky
our poems fly through the universe
if you have to leave don't tell me why*

— R. Zukowski

*Like times past
Better forgotten,
The mist creeps close.
Fills the woods
With melancholy beauty.
Gently, gently,
Clings, shifts,
Deepens, then thins.
As cryptic, as clear,
As never-lost love
Strong then weak
Like unconquered fear.*

*The mist creeps close.
As close as my heart.
Every kept secret,
Every lost dream,
Drifts in the veil.
Thick, exquisite sadness
Reaches into me
Slips from me
My heart seems to wait,
Breathless,
For the fog to part
Revealing the aim of all my hope
But all is quiet
No sound,
But the patter of my thoughts
Like gems of water
Gathered on the limbs
Suspended, perfect, pendants
Finally falling
To be swallowed in the mud*

*I wonder.
Is this how dreams die?
No fanfare, no consequence,
Alice only in a limbo
Of pearl-vague vapor
Certain, serene, sinister,
That returns with a reminder
Of what could have been.
Stirring the longing,
The regret,
Presumed hidden forever*

— Nick Hardcastle

REFLECTIONS ON NEW ICE

*I watched with delight the sure movement of your skates:
Your back and limbs were firm with the rightness of position.
You took space,
Formed it,
And let it go,
Mastering the flow.
And I watched you through the video camera
Wondering if I could do it, too.
And as I "white-balance" the video camera
On the ice mirror,
I am watching the balance in you.*

*Beauty without strength is vapid
Strength without beauty is force.
The two combine in a women's game
Adding grace and finesse to sport.
And I see through the eyepiece what I long for
In the world outside the rink
The female side to complement
And hold the male in check.*

*And as I "white-balance" the video camera on the ice mirror,
I am watching the delicate balance in you.
And I am hopeful.*

— Laura Gaccione, 1989

LYONESSE

*In Lyonesse, in waters deep
I met a prince who made me weep;
He broke my pride and then my heart
And knew not why he played a part.*

*I fled him down a vale of tears,
He fled me down a vale of fears.
But each tear turned into a flower
To make of love a gentle bower.*

*And each fear faded in the prince
For I have seen him often since.
This garden lies beneath his feet
And in it now we sometimes meet.*

*My beauty lies beneath the sea;
These words should cause him no distress.
Above and here wist only me;
His spell is safe in Lyonesse.*

*Above and here a loving friend
To him these songs that never end.
I have no arms in my defence
The only one is innocence.*

— A.O. Howell

©WAYNE DUNLOP



The flow of the ice: wind, water, and weather collaborated to create this beaver pond sculpture

ROAD WORK

It doesn't take a blizzard to make a Monterey winter. Last November I was caught with firewood lying beyond the reach of my truck in a snow-covered field. I initiated Plan B, and after steady rain interrupted progress for a full day, found myself lying out on Point Road in the pitch dark of early evening with a flashlight, adjusting the hitch on a rented log-splitter. The temperature had dropped into the teens. Tall pines rocked back and forth overhead and the wind roared. One small problem followed another until I decided that instead of pitching a fit I would come back in the morning refreshed by sleep. The gusty wind woke me several times overnight, and continued unabated in the morning, when it was colder and still dark. But things went well—until I tried to drive back home from the lake.

Point and Sylvan Roads are both privately owned and maintained, and the hard left turn from Point onto Sylvan leads into a slight rise, which was smoothly covered with black ice. My new snow tires whined as I came to a stop halfway up. I had no sand with me. Backing downhill on ice with the splitter in tow was problematic: in and out of the truck a dozen times—always with that mincing, graceless ice-walk step so characteristic of winter—tugging the splitter back into line behind the truck. Soon enough I was once again on my back under the truck, this time in the dark before dawn, in the middle of a slight hill on ice near a blind corner, the wind meanwhile blasting at the trees waving overhead. I was rattled.

Don Amstead got me out that morning. Don caretakes several houses in addition to his day-job as Monterey Highway Superintendent, and he was wheeling sand from a pile on Point Road down to the shoreline to plump up a private beach off-season. He loaned me his shovel while he moved another wheelbarrow-load, and I spread a little sand from the back of my truck onto the icy slope. He suggested starting my run in second gear to help keep my wheels from spinning. I drove out with ease.

A little cold, some wind, more darkness than light in a day, mixed precipitation—this is the real stuff of winter. We all have to deal with it one way or another, but Don and his crew (Rich Crittendon, Peter LePrevost, and Lyman Thomson) are the front line. They drive hundreds of miles in snow, sleet, and freezing rain over Monterey's fifty miles of dirt and paved road every time there's a storm. Don and Richie take the watch on alternate weeks. If there's a storm in the forecast, the watch alerts the others when it's time to plow, or lay down sand and salt.

I drove down to the town shed late one night toward the end of December, through five inches of perfect snowball material, to go along plowing. They had sanded the black-top roads in the evening, then gone home. At temperatures of twenty degrees or more, salt melts the snow and ice, and that layer on the pavement facilitates effective plowing. By eleven o'clock wet snow was stuck to wire fences, trees were bent, and the wind was up, plastering the tree trunks white on one side.

Don Amstead has supervised the Monterey road crew since April of 1989. He is an experienced engineer who has done design and survey work on local roads in addition to the usual management duties. But when it comes to opening roads in winter, he's driving plow trucks right along with the rest of the crew. I listened to the radio traffic while I waited in the garage. Don's wife Pat keeps in touch with the trucks over the two-way radio from their home. The contact brings a measure of indoor warmth to the dark, solitary job of plowing late at night. Not that it was cold inside the Ford 350. Don had the heater going full blast to keep all the windows clear. When snow fills the air and covers the roads, you need maximum visibility. (Rich Crittendon, on the other hand, runs the defroster hard when he's out driving the Mack, but opens his window to keep cool. Winter is when you sweat until you freeze.)

The Ford 350 is the town's newest four-wheel-drive truck, and it has a powerful International Navistar diesel engine. Don churned up the hill on Fairview Road toward Beartown at about 25 m.p.h., throwing a plume of snow over our shoulder. He hears complaints about the damage plowing does to mailboxes, but throwing snow at knee-level could be as bad or worse, and slowing down would certainly add hours to the job, raising the cost of a budget item that's already large. As Don knows better than anyone, maintaining public roads is a classic some-of-the-people-all-of-the-time undertaking. Fairview Road is now cleared from end to end. The midsection used to remain closed, but individuals with plows would punch through on their own, then someone else would inevitably follow, and get stuck.

We made our way along the back roads, and took Hupi past the lake and through to Route 23 near the Otis line. The snow changed to freezing rain and back to snow again at the higher elevations. Some kids on Hupi Road were evidently having a party, and cars were parked along both sides. Someone wandered out to apologize, but we got through okay. Don was glad last-minute good intentions did not leave a car stuck sideways across the road.

Don's son Keith was plowing that night to fill in for Peter LePrevost, who was sick (although he came to work the next day). Keith was in touch over the radio, working down on Sandisfield and New Marlborough Roads. Amstead father and son kept at it until two or three in the morning, when I was starting to nod off.

Snow continued falling next day, and soon temperatures sank below zero. By New Year's Eve icicles hung from eaves everywhere, the snowbanks were above eye-level, and Main Road showed the broad tan and white stripes of cold-weather traffic. It was our classic winter moment this season. Within a week it turned warm, and the town crew worked to keep storm drains open and check the



© LYMAN THOMSON

The serene winter beauty of a sunrise over a freshly plowed road.

creeping ice that results from cycles of freeze and thaw. Two and three-tenths inches of rain fell here the second week of January.

What is seasonal weather nowadays? This winter has been so warm skaters can't keep ice on the rink. The Tuesday night men's hockey league has vanished in the gloom with not one game played. According to Pittsfield meteorologist George Bulgarelli, January of 1998 contained three sunny days. Snowfall has been near normal. Who could predict, for all our sophisticated information systems? But for a few puffs of wind somewhere high up and hundreds of miles off, we might have been part of the ice storm that devastated eastern Canada and northern New England while it rained here. Or all that ice might have been snow. Several times this winter significant snowfall has been forecast for the higher elevations of southern Berkshire County, and we have ended up with mixed precipitation and a few inches of white slush on the ground. Snow turns to rain and back to snow. The town crew takes what comes.

Each member of the crew has a truck he usually drives. Peter LePrevost routinely runs the Oshkosh, the largest of the town's

four-wheel drive trucks, an angular rig with a tall, narrow profile in front. Peter is also the unofficial mechanic on the town crew. One day in mid-January he was under the hood of the Ford 350, because the coolant wasn't getting up to operating temperature. After draining the system he removed the thermostat. "International engine in a Ford truck with a thermostat made in Germany," he said, shaking his head as he went off to begin the search for parts over the phone.

Rich Crittendon usually drives the Mack, the only two-wheel-drive dump truck used for plowing and sanding. Often the roads get so icy that the Mack can't climb a hill moving forward, ahead of the sand being spread from the rear of the truck; then Rich uses the mirrors to negotiate hills in reverse. Holding a big truck to the crown of the road in slippery conditions is vital. Once up on Blue Hill Road, Monterey Police Chief Gareth Backhaus was approaching Rich, who was driving the Mack. As they slowed and moved slightly aside to pass each other, Gareth stopped and rolled down his window to speak with Rich, who stopped in turn, realizing a nanosecond too late that there, off the crown and without forward momentum, the off-center

weight of the tapered plow would slide the truck into the ditch. Which, in slow motion, it sure enough did.

On the same day that Peter was servicing the Ford, Rich was re-mounting the license plate higher up on the Mack, out of the way of backup lights he had installed down low to help him see the road better when he spreads sand driving backwards. Rich spliced wires into the new license plate light and sealed them with rubber silicone to keep out as much salt as possible. The dump body and sander on the Mack are made of stainless steel to withstand the ravages of constant contact with water and salt. The steel catwalks around the dump body are not stainless, and have to be sandblasted and painted frequently to survive at all.

Lyman Thomson drives the GMC, a one-ton four-wheel-drive dump truck, clearing many of the smaller roads, both paved and dirt. Lyman also operates the grader, on the front of which a twelve-foot plow can be mounted for pushing deep snow. The underslung grader blade is used to cut back tall snowbanks after a big storm.

I rode with Lyman one morning in the GMC while he plowed Gould, Curtis, Blue Hill, Corashire, Brett, River, Swann, and Fairview Roads, then returned to touch up Gould Road. In about the time it would take to drive to New York in good weather, we had covered a few miles of local roads several times over. As Lyman cleared the intersection of Blue Hill and Main Roads that morning (lower the plow, forward a few feet, lift the plow, back up, lower, forward, lift, reverse, over and over again), Jack Ryder walked over from his house on the corner to raise the flag at the Monterey Veterans' Memorial. Along for the ride, I took away a mental snapshot of local routine I hadn't seen before. Lyman often carries a camera when he plows, on the lookout especially for views of fresh snow at daybreak. He regards Monterey as one of the world's beautiful places, and photography helps remind him to see while he works in the small corners of town.

— Peter Murkett

WILDLIFE SURVEY

Visitor of National Importance. A bald eagle, the national symbol, has been seen several times perched in the trees over the Housatonic, at the north end of Tyringham Valley. Bonner McAllester saw it January 3, and again February 11, at the same place and Brian and Paula Snyder saw it February 1: "...At first I thought it might be a bear since it was so big, but as we got closer it was unmistakable. Do you know if there are any nesting pairs in the area? ...not for long if they are eating from the river!"

©LYMAN THOMSON



Open streams were the rule this winter due to the warmer than usual temperatures.

Two hunting hawks. The McAllester/Baker family saw a marsh hawk course over a field of uncut hay and catch a vole, February 5 in Ancram, and Mary Brock saw a sharp-shinned hawk devouring a bluejay on the ground near her feeder on Mt. Hunger Road, January 23.

Other birds. The Brock feeder has attracted a flock of many goldfinches and pine siskins, a flock of pine grosbeaks, redpolls and the more usual winter birds as well. Bonner saw a pair of pileated woodpeckers at this end of the Tyringham Valley, early on the morning of February 11. The antiphonal tapping of woodpeckers seems to be an early sign of spring and to be signaling rather than prandial. Repeatedly, a high tapping on a small branch is answered immediately by a lower tapping on a larger resonator.

Flying squirrels. These attractive small squirrels with their soft fur and big nocturnal eyes are not often reported unless someone has an illuminated feeder that will show them up after dark. Sudi Baker, however, saw an unusual number. They had been living luxuriously on grain intended for horses. When this was put in metal barrels the squirrels got hungry and came swarming out of hiding when Sudi, later, was measuring out grain. It seemed to her that there were about twenty.

Dale Duryea has had a couple of squirrel calls and concludes that they were flying squirrels from the size of the holes they made getting into the houses. The Amidons had a time shooing one out of their kitchen a few days ago: "They're really fast!"

Dale and his children went down to Lake Garfield to look at the ice and saw a muskrat sunning himself by a springhole on the west shore of Parker's Cove. Bonner and her family have been watching several muskrats, reported elsewhere on these pages.

A mink was running up Dowd Brook, in and out of the water and along the bank, in the little valley west of the McAllester house, January 18. It was quite tame, but when David approached, it hid under some ice thrown up along the edge of the brook.

Dale Duryea's observations since the last survey: a bobcat, big as life, only 150 yards from Dale's house, the morning of February 16. It didn't seem afraid of anything and walked calmly off towards the Pedersen's woods. It could be the one seen earlier by the Grotzes, in the same vicinity. Dale said it looked so much at home we can expect more sightings. A large red fox is in the

area, so big he must be a male. Foxes will be mating soon.

There is little sign of cottontails, but Dale has seen snowshoe hare tracks in Beartown Forest in the last couple of weeks. Another scarcity, lately has been deer sightings: They are probably "yarded up," gathered in a small area back in the thick woods. He heard geese in the Housatonic in the open water behind the Lee bowling alley. "Coyotes are active; there are lots of signs about." The Amidons saw coyote tracks and traces of blood, going from their feeder into the woods February 15. We're getting quite a few instances of predators taking advantage of the congregations around a feeder. A chorus of coyotes was heard near number 33 Hupi Road on the evening of February 10.

As the snow and ice have been retreating from driveways in the last few days there has been ground feeding in the exposed grass and small weeds. David McAllester saw a small flock of juncos hard at work, and Beryl saw twenty-two (!) doves doing likewise, February 17.

— David P. McAllester

COLLAPSE OF THE MUSQUASH HOUSE

There is a certain swamp on our regular beat, just before Stony Brook Road comes out onto Monument Mountain Road. We take Blue Hill Road over from Monterey, unless it is daunting with ice, pause at the top for a deep breath of the western vista, then swoop down to the bottom of the valley.

Here we are always rewarded with some sort of wildlife action where Muddy Brook goes under the road, on the way to its confluence with Stony Brook, in the swamp. In this mild winter, the water on the north side of the road has stayed open in the middle and we have been entertained for weeks watching "our" muskrats, going about their business there.

Often we have seen five at once, which is unusual for muskrats. They have the reputation of being solitary, unfriendly types, but in this place we have seen two or three in a heap on a small eating platform, about forty feet from the road. We get out the car binoculars and scan around for more. Usually there have been at least two others, swimming nearby or else sitting up on the ice, munching on cattails. In our experience, the five muskrats have been guaranteed to be in evidence if the day is sunny, and sometimes we've seen them even in cold or blustery weather.

Muskrats look very like small beavers and their life-style is similar, too. They nest in banks or else in mounded constructions in ponds or swamps. Like beavers, they stay active all winter and swim out under the ice, protected by their long glistening guard hairs and thick woolly undercoats.

Beavers are strict vegetarians, but muskrats have a varied diet, consisting

largely of cattails and waterlilies but including fair numbers of crayfish, salamanders, fish, frogs, and small turtles. Their principal meat staple is freshwater clams or mussels. If you find a pile of gleaming mussel shells in shallow water or on a bank, you know you have come to a muskrat picnic spot.



Beaver lodges are substantial, like the brick house in *The Three Little Pigs*. But muskrats use flimsy stuff: muck, pondweeds, roots, and cattails. Sometimes they don't build until after the ice has come. They then construct a "push-up" by making a hole in the ice and shoving vegetation up through it to sit on top. When they get a pile a foot and a half high they hollow it out a bit and get a small sleeping chamber which is good until the ice melts.

Our muskrats looked to me to be piled on the verandah of a cattail hut, which domed up behind them about eighteen inches high. It was in the middle of a patch of open water which never froze. Two or three gleaming red-brown muskrats would lounge there, sometimes with a tail or two draped in the water. Another might come along and squeeze in without seeming to increase the mass by very much. There would be some grooming, some sleeping, some snacking. It was always with a sigh that we

turned away from this vision of the good life and headed back for the mainstream: Route 7, Stockbridge, Great Barrington.

Then one day, the muskrat house vanished. We stopped on a sunny Sunday, ready to soak up a little restorative muskrat right living, and it just wasn't there. I got as close as I could and only found a depression in the muck and reeds where there used to be a modest bulge. We looked all around and found no muskrats, no leavings of cattail snacks. Putting together all the evidence, here are our conclusions.

Muskrats do not store a winter food supply the way beavers do. They count on being able to forage under or over the ice. When supplies run low in late winter, they often resort to eating the material of which their house is made, from the inside out. This works up to a point, especially if the weather stays cold and keeps the thin dome frozen.

Our weather has not stayed cold. Eager tappers have their buckets on the maples quite early this year, and the thin-walled muskrat house on Muddy Brook caved in about Valentine's Day. We'll keep looking for the five friendly Musquashes, but I bet they have gone off in search of new food supplies; they also need to get a new house built in time for babies in May.

— Bonner McAllester

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REP RAP

Home rule is a treasured component of a democratic system and is not a measure to be taken lightly at any level of government. Home rule enables a community to have control over its own destiny on issues that directly affect us in our daily lives. That is why the recent decision by the Massachusetts Department of Telecommunications and Energy (DTE) has many towns in an uproar because it defies home rule and, of course, logic.

Last month the DTE ruled that wireless cellular telephone companies could bypass local planning and zoning boards in order to obtain a license to build a tower in a community. The ruling gives cell phone companies three avenues in which to secure a license should efforts with local zoning laws prove frustrating; 1. seek an order from superior court allowing them to build a cell tower; 2. appeal to federal court or 3. apply directly to the DTE rather than the city or town. This decision defies home rule by removing town boards and their bylaws from the regulating

process. The DTE, through its ruling, is essentially prohibiting towns from having a say on what is in their own backyard.

Since the passage of the federal Telecommunications Act local boards have convened to revise zoning laws in order to better address the new regulations restricting municipalities from conducting an outright ban on cellular towers. In the past few years many citizens volunteered to sit on boards to craft responsible cell tower bylaws that would protect individual

communities and its residents while respecting the interests of business. The diligent efforts of local boards have resulted in bylaws which adhere to federal statutes, and allow communities to have a

sufficient amount of oversight in the siting of cell towers.

The DTE's decision was met with outrage across the state. I wrote to the DTE to protest their decision and I signed legislation to revert the Department's ruling. In response to the public's outcry, a hearing was held at the State House to review pending cell tower legislation. Many of the bills presently in the Legislature, while having merit, do not adequately address the contributions made by local cell tower committees in recent years. I testified to that affect at the hearing and offered my resources to draft a comprehensive proposal which takes into account the efforts already made by municipalities and gives towns flexibility in responding to local concerns. Without this type of focus home rule will be disregarded.

If you wish to further discuss this or any other matter, please do not hesitate to contact my full-time district office at (413)243-0289.

— Rep. Christopher J. Hodgkins

CHARLES J. FERRIS Attorney at Law



342 Main St. Gt. Barrington, MA 01230

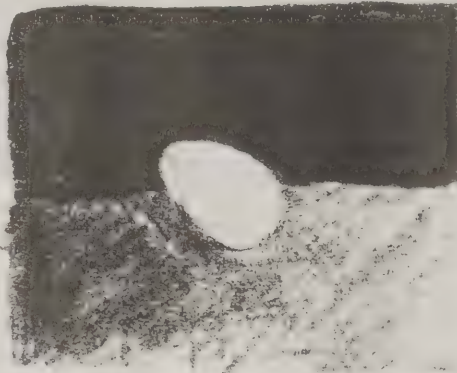
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The flag stands a lonely sentry at Blue Hill Cemetery.

SENATOR SAYS

Small Town and Rural Caucus.

I am pleased to have joined forty nine of my colleagues in the House and Senate as a member of the newly-formed Small Town and Rural Caucus. This bipartisan group of legislators pursues three main goals on behalf of towns in the Commonwealth with fewer than 12,000 residents; 1. to obtain equity in state policy decisions and funding allocations; 2. to secure the flexibility to modify programs designed for urban areas to fit rural conditions; and 3. to foster economic development and job creation appropriate to small town and rural life.

In the upcoming year, legislators in the caucus will be working on issues which include funding for regional school transportation, establishing school-based health centers

in smaller communities, and obtaining equitable funding for road and bridge projects jeopardized by the expenditures of the "Big Dig." I also look forward to working with caucus members to address the issue of regulating cellular phone towers and allowing call and volunteer fire departments to establish reasonable fitness standards for member firefighters.

Speaking of Cellular Phone Towers. Many constituents have contacted me to express their outrage at a decision issued by the state's Department of Telecommunications and Energy (DTE). The DTE's ruling could

weaken local regulatory control of towers to serve commercial mobile radio services (CMRS) providers, better known as cellular telephone companies. The transmission towers which relay cellular phone frequencies can be eyesores or potential safety hazards if local planning board or other permitting bodies are not allowed to enforce reasonable regulations to ensure that the structures fit local conditions.

The DTE decision essentially ruled that CMRS providers are "public service corporations" under the definition in Massachusetts General Law Chapter 40A, and are therefore exempt from local regulations. I disagree with this finding. The very proliferation of CMRS providers proves that there is sufficient competition within the industry to make unnecessary the protections provided through

public service corporation status. I favor the approach recommended by local experts in land-use law, who advise that legislation to exclude CMRS providers from the public service definition would be the most direct way to restore the traditional right of towns to regulate structures within their borders.

Since the DTE ruling on January 8, I have coordinated efforts with municipal advocates who are addressing this issue through the judicial process (appealing the DTE decision to the Supreme Judicial Court), the legislative process and through direct negotiation with industry representatives. I testified about the need for local permitting oversight at a hearing in the State House on February 3.

College Financial Aid. If your family includes a student planning to attend college this fall, now is the time to submit applications for financial aid. The Higher Education Information Center and the Association of Independent Colleges and Universities in Massachusetts has asked me to help publicize available publications to assist students in obtaining state, federal, private and college-supported scholarships and loans. Please contact my district office at (413) 442-6810 if you would like to obtain copies of helpful publications, or call the toll-free number for the Career and Learning Line 1-800-442-1171.

Summer Jobs at State Parks. I am pleased to provide Legislative Referral forms for persons interested in seasonal employment with the state's Department of Environmental Management (DEM). A wide range of jobs become available at various points throughout the Division of Forests and Parks in western Massachusetts each summer, and I am happy to recommend applicants from the Berkshire, Hampden, Hampshire and Franklin District. Please contact my district office for more information (413) 442-6810.

— Senator Andrea F. Nuciforo, Jr.



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*Went fishing. Had a mess of roasted fish. Worked hard at haying. Use
 my spare time in reading, sleeping, and going to the City. I love that place.*

— Page 53 (words recorded by Elihu Harmon of Monterey, age 21, in 1871)

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MONTEREY TAXES:

To Gripe or Not to Gripe?

Do we pay too much? The following comparisons may lead you to the conclusion that we enjoy our enviable environment at very reasonable cost.

Tax facts: Of 340 cities and towns reporting annual tax figures for fiscal year 1997, 326 have rates higher than our 8.72 rate; six Massachusetts towns endure rates in excess of 20.0

In Wendell, Massachusetts citizens pay an average annual tax of \$1728 on average property value of \$80,000.

We pay an average bill of \$1549 on average value of \$177,685.

Among the thirteen towns enjoying lower rates are four local communities; Alford 7.44, Mt. Washington 5.75, Otis 7.48, and Tolland 4.68

Sampling other southern Berkshire towns; Egremont 9.58, Great Barrington 15.94, Lee 15.28, Lenox 13.80, New Marlborough 9.91, Sandisfield 8.80, Sheffield 14.43, Stockbridge 10.46, and Tyringham 9.12

Finally, a remarkable statistic in Monterey is the percentage of property classified as exempt, i.e. state parkland or non-profit preserve, which is 36%. Plus the percentage of property classified as Chapter Land, that is property taxed at significantly reduced rates and dedicated legally to agriculture, forestry or public recreational purposes: 14%.

NOW is it time to gripe? Not if you value the beauty, solitude, flora, fauna and peace that holds such allure for our seasonal visitors. Taxes not collected on protected properties are our insurance against unbridled development and the eventual loss of a town and life style too precious to squander - especially when development of presently tax protected land is no guarantee of lower taxes.

No gripes from me.

— Jim Bracken

Editors Note: Mr. Bracken is a member of the Board of Assessors.

THOMAS VICKERMAN

Thomas J. Vickerman, 41, of Sandisfield Road died on Friday, January 30, from injuries sustained in a snowmobile accident in Bear-town State Forest.

Tom was born in Great Barrington on October 30, 1966, son of Anne E. Babis Vickerman and the late Harry O. Vickerman. He attended local schools and was a 1975 graduate of Mount Everett Regional School in Sheffield, and he also graduated from Berkshire Community College in Pittsfield. He served in the Air Force from 1976 to 1979, and was stationed in Plattsburgh, New York.

A painter, Tom was employed by Berkshire Painting and Landscaping. He enjoyed the outdoors, restoring antique motorcycles, and riding snowmobiles. In the early 1970's he was an amateur motocross racer. He was a member of the British Iron Riders Association, and played in the Monday night pitch league at Shea's Pine Tree Restaurant in Sheffield. He and his wife, the former Gloria Goewey, were married August 22, 1981, at his parents home in Monterey.

Besides his wife and mother, of Monterey, he leaves a daughter, Amber-Lyn Vickerman, and a son, Thomas K. Goewey, both at home. He also leaves two brothers. Peter Vickerman of Washington, Maine, and Robert Vickerman of Northboro, Massachusetts.

The Thomas Goewey Memorial Trust fund has been set up at Berkshire Bank to provide for the children's education. Please contact Berkshire Bank for information regarding donations.

THE OBSERVER

January 25 - February 25

High temp. (2/10)	48°
Low temp. (2/15)	3°
Wind-chilled low temp. (2/14&15)-20°	
Avg. high temp.	37.2°
Avg. low temp.	20.1°
Avg. temp.	27.9°
Rain and melted snowfall	2.54"
Snowfall	7"
High bar. press. (2/16)	30.24
Low bar. press. (2/24)	29.18
High wind gust (2/13)	38 mph.

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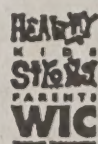
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PERSONAL NOTES

Gige O'Connell's newest grandchild (number seven!), Madelinne Margaretta Pope, was born at 3:30 p.m. on December 31, 1997. Her mother is Mary-Anne O'Connell Pope and her dad is Frank Pope who says she is a very fiscally responsible child as she arrived in 1997, in time to be a tax deduction.

Word also came in from proud new grandparents Jane and Alan Salamon announcing the birth of Sophia Salamon Antonioli on February 3, 1998. Sophia is the daughter of Jill Salamon and Greg Antonioli, and the sister of Carly.

The honor rolls are out and congratulations are in order to the students from Monterey who have made their mark. For the second marking period at Mount Everett Regional School the following students have been named to the honor roll: grade seven: **Claire Mielke** earned high honors, and **Cody Rosenthal**

achieved honors; grade eight: **Andrea Parks** achieved honors; grade nine: **Katy Vallianos** earned high honors, and **Kim Gero** achieved honors; grade ten: **Shanna Hamm** earned high honors, and **Shawn Tryon** achieved honors; grade twelve: **Ellen Hamm** earned high honors. For the second quarter marking period at Monument Mountain Regional High School the following students were named to the honor roll: grade nine: **Maggie Clawson** earned high honors, and **Lauren Goldfinger** achieved honors; grade eleven **David Shea** earned high honors; and in grade twelve **Bethany Sadlowski** earned high honors. For the first trimester at Berkshire School **Lucy Rosenthal**, in her junior year, has achieved honors. Hats off to all these accomplished students!

Happy Birthday on March 1 to **Arnold Garber**, **Graham Quisenberry** and **Jeremy Vallianos**, on March 5 to **Travis Raab**, on March 7 to **Janet**

Garber, on March 8 to **Anne Marie O'Connor**, on March 10 to **Bob Gauthier**, on March 13 to **Valerie Costas** and **Bonner McAllester**, on March 14 to **Barbara Shea**, on March 17 to **Annabel Edelman**, on March 19 to **Bill Thieriot**, on March 23 to **Carol Edelman**, on March 27 to **Alf Pedersen** and **Ellen Pedersen**, on March 29 to **Roma Foreman**, and on March 31 to **Barbara Gauthier**, **Diana Lazzarini**, and **Ray Ward**.

Happy Anniversary on March 9 to **Jerry and Giuliana Raab**, and, on March 17, happy St. Patrick's Day to everyone.

We enjoy hearing your news, and passing on birthday and anniversary greetings. If you have any you would like to share, please drop me a line at P.O. Box 351, Monterey, MA 01245, or give me a call at 528-6691, if possible, before the twelfth of each month. Thank you so much.

— Ann Higgins



A blast from the past: Monterey's Brownie Troop from eighteen years ago. Front row, from left to right, Jenny Brown, Natasha Grotz, Meghan Bradley, Tammy Jervas, Mari Makuc, Amber Hall, Noelle Pixley, Jessica Thorn. Back row, from left to right, Nancy Bynack, Shelby Loder, Jeana Dumont, Leland Williams. Photo courtesy of Jane Thorn.

CALENDAR

Sundays, AA meetings, 9 a.m., in the Monterey Firehouse, Main Road.

Saturday, March 7, 1:30 p.m., Town Republican Caucus, Monterey Firehouse, Main Road.

Saturday, March 14, 7:00 p.m., Berkshire Jewish Singles 50+, Game Night. There will be dessert, coffee, and games at the home of one of our members. R.S.V.P. to Norma Skye at the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires, (413) 442-4360.

Monday, March 16, 10 a.m.-noon, South County La Leche League meets at the Guthrie Center, Great Barrington. Free advice and support for breastfeeding. For questions and directions call Maureen at 528-6619.

Monday, March 16, 7-8:30 p.m., discussion group for book "The Gospel of the Beloved Disciple," call Pastor Keith Snow for information, 528-5850.

Tuesday, March 17, Free cholesterol and blood pressure screening, open to all age groups, Town Hall basement.

Saturday, March 21, 1-2:30 p.m., Rabies Clinic, Monterey Firehouse, Main Road.

Wednesday, March 25, American Cancer Society Daffodil Days daffodil pick-up at the Monterey General Store.

Thursday, March 26, 6:30, Community Dinner potluck in the community room of the Monterey Meeting House.

Saturday, March 28, 9 a.m.-noon, Monterey Preservation Land Trust trail blazing on Mount Hunger. All hands needed. To sign up call Storrs Olds, 528-4486.

Saturday, March 28, Square and contradancing at the Sheffield Grange, Route 7, Sheffield, Mass. Music by Mountain Laurel, calling by Joe Baker. All dances are taught and beginners and children are welcome. Refreshments served.

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News by mail (free!) to Barbara Tryon, Business Manager. We will typeset a text-only ad for your Monterey-based business, service, or event, or advertisers may submit an ad with graphics on a Macintosh formatted disk. Address your request for advertising rates and further information to the Editor, or telephone her in Monterey at 413-528-1170.

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Contributions from local artists this month: Bonner McAllester, p.17, and Sudi Baker, p.18.

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